

The Monthly Musical Record.

MARCH 1, 1880.

OUR MUSICAL SUPPLEMENT.

IN pursuance of the plan commenced in our last Number, we are pleased to be able to offer to our readers two more new and interesting pieces of music, which will doubtless receive as glad a welcome as the former pieces have done. In fact we may say, with a feeling of gratification if not of pride, that the novel addition to our pages has proved to be of so much interest that it has formed the theme of congratulation on all sides. It therefore shall be the subject of the best endeavour to continue the matter in the like spirit in which it has been commenced, as we are assured that the sympathies of our subscribers are fully with us, and that we can count upon their cordial co-operation and encouragement.

The pieces given in this Number are the "Valse Noble" from "Albumblätter," by Cornelius Gurlitt, and the Menuet for the Pianoforte, Op. 49, No. 1, by Xaver Scharwenka, which the composer has played at his concerts in many places, and always with the same success. The merits of both pieces given are patent to all who can read and judge. Concerning the author of the Menuet, it may interest our readers to know that Xaver Scharwenka is yet a young man, having been born at Samter, in the province of Posen, in Poland, on the 6th of January, 1850. His works are of such a character that few who have the interests of music at heart will object to joining in the wish that his life may be long spared, that the treasures of pianoforte music may be enriched by his contributions. Cornelius Gurlitt, the composer of the "Valse Noble," and a great number of other works in various styles, but chiefly for the pianoforte, was born at Altona in 1820. As a teacher of that instrument, as well as of the organ, he has led a successful and useful life. His writings show him to be possessed of a fine fancy and a fertile flow of melody, and although in England the knowledge of his compositions has been scanty hitherto, the few recently made known will soon tend to exalt his fame and his name in a land ever ready to welcome talent from whencever it comes.

SOME REMARKS ON THE PIANOFORTE WORKS OF MENDELSSOHN, AND PETERS' EDITION FINGERED BY TH. KULLAK.

By FR. NIECKS.

A FINGERED edition of the pianoforte works of Mendelssohn will no doubt be welcome to a great number of pianists: first, to those still in a state of pupilage who have no master to guide them; secondly, to the teachers who wish to devote the time which they would otherwise have to spend in suggesting and correcting the fingering of their pupils to matters less or not at all communicable by means of rag-paper and printer's ink. The edition before us differs from Lebert's, Bülow's, and Liszt's revisions (*Bearbeitungen*) of Haydn's, Mozart's, Clementi's, Beethoven's, Weber's, and Schubert's pianoforte works (Instructive Ausgabe klassischer Klavierwerke), Klindworth's revision of Chopin's works, Henselt's of Weber, Tausig's Selection of Clementi's Studies, Bülow's Selection of Cramer's Studies, &c., in this, that Kullak confined himself solely to the fingering of the text, the intelligibility and playability of which, and the composer's careful notation of the marks of expression, the use of the pedal,

&c., make further directions and elucidations hardly anywhere necessary. That Kullak accomplished his task satisfactorily will be readily conceded, and is, indeed, no more than might have been expected from the founder of the *Neue Akademie der Tonkunst* in Berlin, who has now directed that excellent institution for more than twenty years, and enjoys a high reputation as a teacher and composer. Considering the question of fingering generally, and from a high point of view, we must come to the conclusion that fingered editions are no better than ready-made clothes. If fingering is to fit nicely and allow the wearer to make an altogether irreproachable appearance, measure requires to be taken for it individually as for coats, waistcoats, and other garments which must and need not be specified. Indeed, the absolutely best fingering cannot be the best in all concrete cases, seeing that fingers, not to go farther, vary in length, strength, suppleness, &c. Another weighty consideration is that the executants' conceptions of the work may differ, and these differences of conception may necessitate different ways of fingering; for we must distinguish between mechanical and expressional fingering. But if we were to insist always on the realisation of our ideal and to reject everything that falls short of it, what would become of us? What, for instance, is the tyro to do who cannot contrive an intelligent, practicable mode of fingering, and who has no master to do it for him? Are we to go without a coat rather than buy one ready-made, because it may possibly not be so comfortable and fit so elegantly as we could desire? Thus in looking at the matter in a more practical spirit we find that a mode of fingering, although not in all cases acceptable in every detail, may do well enough on the whole, and be at least suggestive where it is individually unsuitable. So much I will say about Kullak's labour and fingered editions generally; to say anything about the other qualities of the edition of Mendelssohn's pianoforte works now before us is superfluous, as Peters' publications are well enough known, and the present volumes are in no wise inferior to the best of their predecessors. Leaving, therefore, editor and publisher, I shall now turn to the composer.

Mendelssohn does not shine so much in his pianoforte as in his orchestral and choral works. And the composer knew his weakness as well as, if not better than, anybody else. Expressions like those in the following quotation from a letter written by him (February 7th, 1834) to Moscheles occur often in his correspondence and conversations:—"My own poverty in novel passages [*Wendungen*] for the pianoforte struck me again very much in the Rondo brillante [E flat major, Op. 29] which is dedicated to you. It is they which bring me always to a stand-still and bother me, and I fear you will notice this. In other respects there is a good deal in it that I like, and some passages please me very well; but how I am to set about composing a proper, quiet piece (and I well remember you advised me strongly to do this last spring) I really cannot tell. All that I now have in my head for the piano is about as quiet as Cheapside, and even when I control myself and begin to extemporise very soberly, I gradually break loose again." Reissmann understands the ambiguous word *Wendungen* in the more common sense of "modulations," and regrets the poverty of Mendelssohn's pianoforte works in this respect. But there can be no doubt, for the context and other similar complaints of the composer prove it, that Mendelssohn was thinking of new idiomatic pianoforte phraseology. The poverty complained of by the composer makes itself especially felt in the concert pieces with orchestral accompaniments—the concertos (Op. 25 and 40, in G and in D minor), the Capriccio brillante (Op. 22), the Rondo

brillante (Op. 29), the Serenade and Allegro Gioioso (Op. 43). The passage-work of the spirited concertos, the best of the above-mentioned compositions, for instance, is now hardly less old-fashioned and certainly less varied than that of Mozart. Whilst the concertos of Beethoven and the one of Schumann have become increasingly popular, the reverse has been the case with those of Mendelssohn. It is an interesting fact that the composer's violin concerto on the other hand is as fresh and sparkling as ever, and that the *virtuosi* are as fond of performing it as the audiences of listening to it. Indeed, we may say that it is absent from the *répertoire* of no violin player of any pretension. But, comparatively speaking, how rarely and by how few *virtuosi* are Mendelssohn's pianoforte concertos played! With Chopin's inventiveness of original pianoforte language Mendelssohn might have accomplished great things, and so might Chopin with Mendelssohn's mastery of form and instrumentation; for the strength of the one coincides with the weakness of the other. With regard to some of Mendelssohn's concert pieces it may be pleaded that they were called forth by emergencies, written very fast and for special purposes, as we learn, for instance, of the Serenade and Allegro Gioioso, from a letter to his relatives in Berlin:—"This evening [April 4th, 1838.—Leipzig] takes place the concert of Mme. Botgorscheck, an excellent contralto singer, who persecuted me so much to play that I agreed to do so, and it did not occur to me till afterwards that I had nothing short and suitable. I, therefore, resolved to compose a Rondo, not one single note of which was written the day before yesterday, and which I am to play to-night with full orchestra. It sounds gay enough; but how I shall play it the gods alone know—indeed, hardly they—for in one place I have marked a pause of fifteen bars in the accompaniment, and have as yet no idea what I am to introduce during this time. But to one who plays *en gros* as I do, much is permitted." Mendelssohn's opinion of his pianoforte compositions is perhaps nowhere expressed with greater clearness than in a letter which he wrote from Berlin, on July 17th, 1838, to Ferdinand Hiller:—"Pianoforte pieces, to be sure, I do not write with the greatest enjoyment, nor perhaps with much success, but occasionally I require something new to play, and now and then something suitable for the pianoforte occurs to me, though it may not just be passages, and why should I restrain myself and not write it down?" Indeed, we ought to rejoice that he did so, for his abstinence would have deprived us of some charming pianoforte music. The remark about the passages, however, is somewhat in the style of the fox who did not like sour grapes. By the way, this fox was an admirable philosopher, and is most worthy of imitation. But we must not allow ourselves to be deceived by a word. "Passages" are not necessarily meaningless; indeed, they should in no case be so, not even in pieces written for the display of the virtuoso. However, had Mendelssohn written no passages at all, we could merely regret, as limiting the scope of the composer, the absence of this means of expression, peculiarly characteristic of that short-breathed instrument, the pianoforte, but Mendelssohn did sometimes write passages, and thereby laid himself open to the reproach that they were wanting in interest and variety. We must not omit in this part of our discussion the story which Hiller tells in "Mendelssohn: Letters and Recollections." When Mendelssohn had completed the D minor Trio, he played it to Hiller; the latter was greatly impressed by the fire, spirit, flow, in one word, the masterly character of the work. Still, he had some misgivings about certain pianoforte passages in it, constructed on broken chords, which seemed to him old-fashioned. Having lived in

Paris and in constant intercourse with Liszt and Chopin, Hiller had got so accustomed to the richness of passage-work which marked the new pianoforte school that he ventured to suggest certain alterations in this respect. But Mendelssohn said:—"Do you think that that would make the thing any better? The piece would be the same, and so it may remain as it is." But although at first unwilling to listen to Hiller's suggestions, he finally, after much discussion and some experiments, allowed himself to be persuaded to re-write the pianoforte part, and afterwards was pleased with the result. "I really enjoy that piece; it is honest music after all, and the players will like it, because they can show off with it." This story reminds one of a passage in one of Mendelssohn's letters to his mother, in which he characterises his position as compared to that of Chopin and Hiller. After speaking in laudatory tones of the playing of these two friends of his, he proceeds thus:—"Both, however, labour under the Parisian love of the spasmodic and impassioned [*laboirren nur etwas an der Pariser Verzweiflungssucht und Leidenschaftssücherei*], too often losing sight of the time and sobriety of true music; I again do so perhaps too little; and thus we all three learn from each other and improve each other, while I feel rather like a schoolmaster, and they a little like *mirliflors* or *incroyables*."

There are three elements which, wherever they appear in Mendelssohn's compositions, make them valuable and attractive, and which may be distinguished by the names of the elfin, the home, and the contrapuntal element. The first of these is in the ascendant in the Capriccio in F sharp minor, Op. 5; No. 7 of "Sieben Charakterstücke," Op. 7; Scherzo in B minor; Scherzo à Capriccio in F sharp minor; No. 2 (E major) of *Trois Fantaisies ou Caprices*, Op. 16; parts of the Rondo Capriccioso, Op. 14, &c. This element manifests itself here and there, and more or less also in the Sonata, Op. 4, the concertos, and in the other concert pieces with orchestral accompaniments. "Hexenspuk," says Mendelssohn, writing from Rome about his *Walpurgisnacht*, "is a foible of mine." Let us rather say "Spuk," especially that of the airy and playful kind, was one of his strong points. The discovery of the elfin world may be said to be owing to Mendelssohn, and is certainly his most brilliant achievement in instrumental music. The second, the home element, or, to be more explicit, the element of homely piety, affection, and contentedness, although present more or less in almost all the pieces for the pianoforte in which the elves are not frolicking, flows most unrestrained and unmixed in the "Songs without Words." It has become the fashion to look down upon Mendelssohn: the present generation, in its zeal to correct the mistake of over-estimating the composer, committed by our predecessors, has been driven to the other extreme. To hear superior specimens of humanity sneer or compassionately simper at the "Songs without Words" is not an uncommon occurrence. It is true, great depth of passion and grandeur of conception do not distinguish these pieces, but passion and grandeur are not indispensable qualities, although so large a number of lyrics might be the better for some admixture of them. Mendelssohn's emotional compass was not great, and a performance of all his books of "Songs without Words" at one sitting would certainly be more than human patience could bear; but the application of such an unfair test may shake, and has shaken, the reputation of even more vigorous composers. However, in measuring the compass of the emotions we must not overlook their beauty and purity, nor the refinement of manner with which they are expressed. The form and kind of the "Songs without Words" was originated by Mendelssohn, and was a creation

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to be proud of. That the form was abused is no fault of Mendelssohn's, and he therefore ought not to be made responsible for it. How well he knew where the danger lay may be gathered from a letter which he wrote to the publisher, Simrock, of Bonn. After mentioning that he would soon send some MSS. which he had promised already for the previous year, he says: "But they are not 'Songs without Words.' Indeed, I do not intend to publish more of that kind, let the Hamburgers say what they will. If there were too many such *animalcula* between heaven and earth, nobody would in the end like them. And, really, too great a quantity of pianoforte music of a similar kind is now composed; another chord should be struck, I think." Mendelssohn's "Songs without Words" are true reflections of the man; they are the natural outcome of a craving need, not the artificial product of speculation. Now, adequately expressed truth that proceeds from a noble nature cannot but be precious, and not only for a short space of time, but for all time. Thus much may be said in justification of their existence, and that these assertions are well founded the following extract (one of many instances in point that might be adduced) from a letter to his sister, whom Mendelssohn loved so much, will prove. "You are still unwell; I should like to be with you, and see you, and talk to you; but it cannot be. Therefore I have written for you a song [he sent this earliest "Song without Words," which, however, he did not publish, with this letter of June 14, 1830] to let you know what I wish and feel; when I was composing it I thought of you, and was much affected."

(To be continued.)

OPERA BOUFFE AND COMIC OPERA.

(Concluded from page 18.)

Opéra bouffe is broadly a bodily transfer to the theatre of the *café chantant* and its congeners the casino and the *bal*. Songs sometimes appealing by tune, but more frequently by mere lightness, and as often by simple indelicacy; duets and trios, songs extended into dialogue, and choruses, vocal dances—instead of being presented as the items in a variety programme—are strung together, without unity or sequence, in a questionable story, and put forward as a dramatic piece. The force of the musical passages upon the stage is exactly the force they would have as the episodes in a mixed concert; the entertainment gains no additional meaning by their presence or position, and would lose nothing by their removal. They might be turned end for end in the piece, and would still go for as much or as little as before.

The dialogue by which these several effects are connected—the conversational "intervals between the selections"—is generally as independent of the setting as is the setting of the book. The plot, when there is one, seldom leaves any of the narrative to the music. It is usually of the slightest in itself, and vague enough without asking help in a dramatic sense; from the composer who can only respond with an impromptu. So frequently as almost to have become traditional, the separation of a husband and wife immediately upon their wedding, and their temptations and errors before they meet again, have formed the subject hitherto. In equivocal word-play and indelicate situation—the gay lover being the hero, the fickle wife the heroine, and the deceived husband the clown—the sickly story is evolved with as much variety of detail as a not very versatile school of authorship can impart to it. Were it not incontrovertible as a matter of fact that *opéra bouffe* grew out of the simpler entertainments existing only by the *demi monde*, this perpetual mockery of the marriage tie would suffice to show the relation.

The "lust of the eye" is the passion of dissipation, and naturally in *opéra bouffe* stage display is no unimportant element. It has to be conceded, too, that here, at times, Wagner himself has been surpassed in luxury and brilliancy of the *mise en scène*. The designer and dresser have brought research and invention to their labours, and have shown that true sense of the grotesque and burlesque which should have been the starting-point also for author and composer. In the mass costumes much ingenuity has been shown in combining sufficient fanciful richness to please the female audience with enough suggestive scantiness to satisfy the other sex. Except as a show, however, the chorus-ballet has no function in *opéra bouffe*, and too often its presence as a spectacle cannot atone for the incongruities thrown upon it. Singing when it ought to be dancing—for the *ensembles* generally come to that—it is made to compromise the matter by automatic noddings of the head and graduated exercises of the elbow, which, having no perceptible reference to the music, distract the attention and neutralise any force of its own.

This neglect to utilise the chorus for a dramatic purpose is all the more incomprehensible since the rest of the vocal music is necessarily lowered to the capacity of singers who often depend upon anything but their voices for their success. The *prima donna* of *opéra bouffe* is primarily popular in the measure of her notoriety elsewhere than at the theatre; it is this that gives meaning to the vicissitudes of her stage adventures and point to the verses she sings. She is a lucky woman if some physical malformation reinforces her moral distortions and enables her to perform those tricks of vocal ventriloquism which add piquancy to songs *à double entente*. Personal appearance not unfrequently supplies artistic graces in the interesting male personage—when the interest is not entirely female, which is seldom. But it is only fair to say that, in the subordinate parts much histrionic ability is at times displayed. Some of the speaking characters are "created" with humour and originality by actors who know that they have little but their own efforts to depend upon. While the principals take the applause at the time, it is the others who are remembered on looking back. This is the dramatic spirit asserting itself where all else is profitless and inane. The lady, the favourite of the moment, for whom everything has been done, who, piece after piece, has appeared in the title *rôle*, you can associate with no particular character, because she is the same personality in all, only singing a different song or repeating another *équivoque*. As far as she is concerned, the author and composer are simply stage milliners.

The success of *opéra bouffe* in Paris, produced as it is for a certain circle, in its own spirit and according to its own tastes, is perhaps not extraordinary. But it is somewhat difficult to see how, in still less coherent form, it should be received favourably on this side of the Channel. All its most startling points in dialogue have to be eliminated, and all the direct pruriency of its story has to be toned down before it will pass our censorship. The plot may remain suggestive after the process, but it is always more or less vague, or even incomprehensible, and a padding of feeble puns from an author's commonplace book, however liberally furnished, does not compensate for the loss of what is sprightly in the undisguised naughtiness of the indelicate original. Nevertheless, although it comes to us emasculated, an *opéra bouffe* that has done well in the original is almost certain to do well or better with our own public. The reason is no doubt the prevailing lightness of the music, which never having had any dramatic mission, loses none of its vivacity by the transfer. Then, of course, there is the stamp of an achieved success

which, from an audience not musical, but willing to be amused by music, secures, even for those airs which have owed their Parisian reception solely to the questionable words attached to them, equal applause with tune and melody. It must be remembered, too, that we have a very large public in much the same sense as the Parisian class for whom *opéra bouffe* was first perpetrated. In a clumsy country-cousinly way, albeit, this class is still an English version of the *demi monde* of Paris, and the adapted piece with the sprightliness and refinement of vice gone, does not ill respond to its tastes and intelligence.

The spectacle in *opéra bouffe*, like the music, repeats itself with us in most of its original strength, whatever that may be, sometimes with a delicacy in its indelicacies which is poetical in comparison with our own coarser essays at indecency. But the acting generally shows a falling off. The principal parts, adapted, in the first instance, as already said, to the very peculiarities of the performers on that side are entrusted to ladies on this side with peculiarities of their own; and the eccentricities do not readily coincide. It is often the case, consequently, that an artistic cork leg here has to do duty for a histrionic hump-back there; notwithstanding that our own pretty noodles may have taken a trip to Paris, and may essay to reproduce the silly prototype even to a stage sneeze. So rarely gifted with stage endowments, however, are most of the ladies who bear the weight of *opéra bouffe* in English that such feeble imitation is preferable to what we should have to endure if they depended upon their own resources simply. The minor characters are the best on this side of the Straits as on the other. They, too, are in the main imitated, but being based upon broader lines, and allowing more scope to the actor as an actor, are more naturally reproduced. A few of our characters and low comedians have done even better than this. When the adaptation [has left them nothing but the faintest outline, they have yet succeeded in building up a *rôle* for themselves, and overweighted as they have been, have stood forth the life of the representation by sheer dramatic vigour. Their success has, however, only made it more palpably lamentable that a slavish reliance upon Paris, not only for plays but for character, should have filled the stage with interpreters who are not actors, but copyists. An absurd feature in the system is, that no matter how the original plot may have to be altered for representation, the effort is not to modify the old characters to the changed story, but to strain the altered story to the old characters. Nothing could be more disastrous to native histrionic art; we were more patriotic two hundred years ago, although it must have been a little ridiculous in practice, when we would not listen to Italian opera unless a portion of the artists were English, and performed their parts in the vernacular.

Another evil in the prevalence of *opéra bouffe* is that it threatens to do away with the professional manager, as well as the legitimate actor. A system which only recognises achieved success, which only deals with a piece on the stage already completed and elaborated, and capable of being taken in at a glance, is not likely to produce men with sufficient grasp and combination to deal confidently with the details of an unacted drama, much less with the more complicated and diffuse elements of a musical work in MS. We have instances of this decadence in managerial aptitude, even where French proclivities are not present, in the multitude of dramatic failures, the poverty of new names, and the obvious tendency to rely upon the reputation of established authors, rather than risk the consequences of judgment upon a new one. The easier method of relying upon French successes, and so avoiding the necessity of

selection, is not only ruining the musical drama, but is most discouraging to native works for the stage of every form. There was a cry, some time ago, for "competent dramatists," but there will be nothing but adaptors and translators until there are competent managers—managers who can decide whether a work is good or bad, without considering whether it is founded upon the French, or only original.

No doubt there are many persons to whom the recitative in Italian opera, the oratorio, and classical music in all forms, are an abhorrence, but who have yet enough taste to admire compositions of a lighter character which would not be the less attractive for having melody, colour, and dramatic purpose. Every now and then in *opéra bouffe*, when the music and the situation have by chance combined with an approach to such a consummation, and, by rare coincidences, the artist has been capable of taking advantage of the opportunity, we have seen how ready the audience has been to be lifted above the level of merely vapid amusement. There is not the slightest reason why a form of lyric drama, all comic, if desired, or only slightly serious—the operatic parallel of light comedy—should not be as welcome as *opéra bouffe* as it is, and it would certainly be more healthy. Indeed, even latterly, the one or two Parisian pieces which, although not sufficiently distinct to stand alone, have slightly left the rest in this direction, have been the most successful. Their comparatively better qualities have caused them to be entitled *opéra comique*. But *opéra comique* they are not. The French *opéra comique* of tradition was perhaps the most natural form of the musical drama, because by preferring dialogue in the narrative passages it avoided some of the absurdities involved by the unyielding fetters of recitative. It, moreover, generally proceeded upon a strongly-written and well-constructed plot, to which the music coming in at a salient scene or situation was, however important, a subsidiary as well as an aid. It was, in fact, so far as form is concerned, the parallel of English opera when the music is written after the book, and when English opera is not merely Italian opera with the recitative turned into dialogue. It is more French than the grand opera, for it has been associated with more French names that have lived, and more French works that have not been forgotten. Unfortunately, recent composers have taken away some of its individuality by drawing it closer to the Italian method with which it originally had nothing in common, for it grew out of the *vaudeville*, and took its name to show the distinction. But the term *opéra comique*, either as applied to the second French lyrical house, or the pieces so styled simply because they are produced there, has long been a misnomer in the sense of implying comic opera. Auber, Hérold, Adam, Mozart, Gounod, and Meyerbeer, all wrote *opéras comiques*—*L'Etoile du Nord* was an *opéra comique*, but it has nothing in common with the school of *Chilpéric*.

Opéra comique and *opéra bouffe*, whatever connection they may have in their original significations, have not the slightest agreement as they now stand. In France, as with us, there is no comic opera in the true sense of the words—a class of piece which must be continuously funny in plot and setting, and at the same time harmoniously dramatic from first to last. The works of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan come nearer to this, however, than the most successful Parisian pieces devised to the same end. The author has always furnished a story which, although sometimes slight, and occasionally over-coloured with his own individuality, has had a plot and consistently extravagant intention. Nor has he condescended

for a moment to resort to nastiness or vulgarity for his humour in prose or verse. His jokes on the stage might be repeated in the drawing-room by any white-tied philosopher anxious to inculcate the Gilbertonian morality to his cousins, his sisters, and his aunts. Mr. Sullivan has generally entered into the spirit of the author so far as to make ludicrous situation and burlesque incident more ridiculous by the music to which he has wedded them. But he does not do all when he does this. The parody of well-known airs which, from the contrast between their present situation and their past associations may add to the fun of an absurd incident is but a mechanical resource after all. Music on the stage, whether comic or serious, should speak by its own force apart from such associations, and the musician who does not strive after originality does not do all that can be done even in *opéra bouffe*.

In conclusion, wherever we look we find that *opéra bouffe*, the most outrageous of stage enormities ever perpetrated, the most useless of purposeless things ever adventured, is not *opéra bouffe* at all, or opera of any kind. In one case we have songs and dances more or less ephemeral strung together by a number of inanities called a plot; and in the other a plot more or less original sprinkled with musical burlesque, which may be an arrangement, but is not a setting. In neither case does the musician correspond to the playwright, or the music spring out of the play. Both succeed equally; and while this continues the dramatist and musician can be dispensed with according to the extreme required. Apart from the Italian houses, opera as a dramatic entertainment has ceased to be. Nor is it likely that its revival would profit the native composer; for reasons already given it is likely that Paris would still have the preference. Indeed, it might almost be said that there are already indications of such a revival and this result.

ARRIGO BOITO'S OPERA "MEFISTOFELE."

(Concluded from page 20.)

THE second part or fourth act represents "la notte del Sabba classico," and is taken from the second part of Goethe's "Faust." By the fragrant banks of the river Penejos, on its silvery waters, in which the full moon is reflected, we find Helena and Pantilas seated in a barge glittering with mother-of-pearl, and surrounded by a group of sirens, whilst Faust is asleep on the green pasture in front,

"L'aura è serena—la luna è piena—l'onda beata!
Canta, canta, o sirena! canta la serenata!"

("Serene is the air, full the moon, happy the wave! Sing, O siren, sing!")

runs the strain of the sirens, whilst Faust in his dreams exclaims, "Helena!" But the barge disappears, and Mephistopheles enters, Faust at the same time awakening and rising.

"Ecco" (says Mephistopheles) "la notte del classico Sabba.
Gran ventura per te che cerchi vita
Nel regno delle favole!"

("Tis now the classical Walpurgis-night. In faith, a great venture in thee who came to the realm of fables in quest of life.")

But Faust is under the spell of classical surroundings. He exclaims—

"I am on Grecian soil! My whole being vibrates with love and emotion."

Not so Mephistopheles. On the Brocken he felt at home; but on the sacred soil of Greece he has no power—he feels out of his element; and, on Helena approaching with her minstrels, he leaves the scene, discomfited, and follows Faust. Helena is lost in sadness and contemplation; but presently her maids announce the arrival of a hero, strange and resplendent, on whose handsome features seems inscribed the word "Amor!"

Faust, magnificently attired in a knight's costume of the fifteenth century, followed by Mephistopheles, Neres, Pantilas, and a number of fauns and sirens, enters, and throws himself at Helena's feet, exclaiming—

"Forma ideal purissima,
Della Bellezza eterna.
Un uom ti si prosterne
Innamorata al suol."

("Form ideal and most pure, of a beauty all eternal, behold at thy feet a man who adores your soil.")

Helena is spell-bound by the beauty of the hero and his voice.

"Dimmi" (she replies) "come farò a parlar l'idioma soave?"

Frugo nel cor e ti rispondo: T'amo!"

("Tell me, teach me how to speak in such accents! . . . I ask my heart, and say, 'I love thee!'")

The minstrels take up the strain, which seems to pervade the air and all around them, and the close of the scene witnesses the heavenly union of Faust and Helena, the union of modern and classical art.

The epilogue takes us back to Dr. Faust's study, which now shows traces of age and decay. Faust, an old man, is sitting, as in the first act, with the Bible open before him; Mephistopheles, the "Incubus," is standing behind; a flickering lamp leaves the room almost in darkness.

"Death draws near, death is approaching,"

intones Mephistopheles, his eyes fixed intently on him who is to be his victim. But suddenly, as if under the spell of a sublime vision, Faust rises, exclaiming—

"O Amor! Rimembranza!
. . . Ogni mortale
Mister conobbi, il Real, l' Ideale,
L'Amore della vergine e l'Amore
Della Dea—Sì. Ma il real fu dolore,
E l' Ideal fu sogno!"

("Through every mystery of mortal life have I passed, the Real, the Ideal, the love of the virgin, and the love of the goddess. Aye. But the Real was pain, the Ideal a dream!")

The longing for higher, purer spheres is growing upon him; before him rises a vision of the celestial choirs; Mephistopheles, feeling his victim escape from his grasp, is becoming more agitated, and at his bidding the fire-place sends forth, amid a glowing light, voices of the sirens, whilst he unfolds his cloak, and calls upon Faust to follow him as of yore. But the strains of the celestial chorus, "Ave Signor degli angeli e dei santi," rise higher; the vision becomes more luminous and intense, throwing the red glow of its rival into the shade, and drowning the voices of the sirens. Mephistopheles makes one last desperate effort to break the spell; but his power is gone: Faust, as if impelled by higher powers, grasps the Bible, and, falling on his knees, exclaims—

" . . . M'è il Vangelo!
Padre nostro m' allontana
Dal demonio mio beffardo
Dio d'amore e di perdono!
Fuggi! fuggi, o tu Satana!"

("Mine is the Gospel! O Father deliver me from the mockery of Satan! God of love and of mercy! Hence, hence, O Satan!")

He is freed from the fetters of Satan. The heavenly portals seem to open; his eyes fixed on the celestial vision, he sings in ecstasy—

"Schinde alfin le sue porte
La sognata città!
Vieni Ideal! Vieni Morte!
Santo attimo fuggente
Arrestati sei bello!
A me l'eternità!"

("The dreamt-of, longed-for city opens her gates at last! Come, O Ideal Come, O Death! Flying moment, holy one, stay! Eternity be mine!")

and drops down—dead but redeemed. A shower of roses and a blaze of light descend from above, amid the alleluias of the angels, and Mephistopheles, vanquished, is engulfed by the ground beneath him.

I have entered thus fully into the details of the libretto, not only in order to give an idea of its great poetical merits, but also to show how widely it differs from Gounod's beautiful work, and how admirably Boito has carried out his intention of rendering the salient features of Goethe's poem in a condensed form. He gives us, not the ordinary stage Faust and Mephistofeles, but the characters as Goethe intended them; and if Boito's libretto has a fault, it is perhaps that of being too deep and philosophical from an Italian point of view.

Such is Boito the poet. And what is Boito the composer? That question has been answered in many different ways. Some say that his music is music of the future; others maintain that it is not Italian but German music; whilst others, again, stamp it as Wagner's music written to Gounod's pattern. No doubt *Mefistofele* is not music of the traditional Italian type. No doubt the thorough knowledge Boito has acquired of the works of the great masters who have treated the subject before him has influenced his style. But to study is one thing, to copy is another; and it is but just to say that Boito has clothed a well-known subject in a form betokening considerable originality and individuality. The score is distinguished by great wealth of ideas, by excellent and skilful writing, and by powerful situations. Among the most successful parts of the opera are the prologue and the epilogue, and it is the former more particularly which has been everywhere received with enthusiastic applause. The music of the Easter-Sunday scene in the first act, the duet in the garden scene, Margherita's airs in the third act, and the duet between Faust and Helena in the "Sabbia classico" are all full of melody which is as original as it is fresh, transparent, and intelligible. This sketch will suffice to show that *Mefistofele* deserves study and attention from all lovers of music, and that Arrigo Boito promises to rank high among living composers. It is to be hoped that his remarkable work will soon find its way to other countries, where opera-managers will do justice to its beauties; for, with the exception of Milan and Bologna, and a good artist here and there, operatic performances in Italy are worse than inferior, the band and chorus being, as a rule, simply disgraceful.

C. P. S.

A LISZT CONCERT IN ROME.

It is well known that, after his annual visit to Weimar, Abbé Liszt is in the habit of spending the greater portion of the winter in Rome before leaving for Pesh; and it was on New Year's Day, a few days previous to his departure, that a concert arranged by himself took place at the Villa d'Este, the residence of his friend and host Cardinal Prince Hohenlohe. The occasion was quite as exciting as a similar *matinée musicale* given in honour of Liszt's presence in Leipzig some years ago, and afforded ample proof that the veteran *maestro* still commands the enthusiastic, not to say the fanatic, admiration of the *élite* of musical society.

Signor Carlo Ducci, the distinguished pianist from Florence, had placed a magnificent Erard at Liszt's disposal, and the latter opened the concert with M. Reisenauer, one of his most promising young pupils, by some of Schubert's marches for four hands, in which Liszt played second. Signor Rotoli sang the *maestro's* "Si j'étais roi," and was followed by M. Reisenauer and Mme. Helbig, who played the "Heroïde funèbre," the former adding the celebrated "Tarantella," which called forth enthusiastic applause. Liszt afterwards accompanied Signor Rotoli to a song, "La Sera," composed by the latter, and then, amid breathless silence, began the *pièce de résistance*—the *maestro's* solo. In honour of Cardinal Hohenlohe's presence he played first his "Ave Maris Stella," dedicated to the Cardinal, and then his transcription of Rossini's "Carità," to which he added new passages and variations, improvising them as he proceeded.

The enthusiasm which burst forth as he rose was indescribable, the numerous fair admirers and satellites who ever surround the *maestro* being particularly demonstrative. The occasion was indeed a memorable one; the *maestro's* appearance has all its old fascination, and, veteran as he is, it may with truth be said that his "touch has still its ancient power."

C. P. S.

CARL ROSA OPERA COMPANY.

THE only event of musical importance which has taken place since the last notice in these pages of the work done by the Carl Rosa Opera Company has been the production of *Aida* in English, the words having been furnished by Mr. Henry Hersee, who has already earned a good experience in these matters. As the character of the work and its peculiarities of style are already known through the medium of frequent performances in Italian in this country at both houses, it would be a labour of supererogation to detain the reader with a description which would probably prove tedious. In a general way it may be said that Verdi in this opera has shown himself not insensible to the fascinations of the Wagnerian school, but has given beauty and grace to things which in other than Italian hands might have proved to be capable only of harshness and deformity. The scoring of the work is greatly improved by the adoption of new forms of expression; the orchestra is no longer "a big guitar," but a lively means of adding colour and form to the author's creation and mode of utterance, and Verdi, with the true instinct of his race, has not been insensible to the charms of shapely melody. *Aida* grows upon the mind each time it is heard, and this may be now, as it has been heretofore, held to be a proof of the vitality of the conception. The interest attached to the opera is increased when it is said that this is the last work which Verdi intends writing for the stage, and that in this particular form of musical expression "his voice will be heard no more." It may be hoped that he may yet see reason to change his mind, and that the lyric stage may be further enriched by the contributions of one who has proved himself to be possessed of the finest genius for dramatic music that modern times have produced. The first performance of *Aida* in English, on Thursday, the 19th February, was, all things considered, a great success. This was due less to the care with which the piece was produced than to the earnestness of the artists. It may be assumed that every pains was taken to present so important a business in a manner worthy of the reputation of the company. Admitting that all diligence was given to the rehearsals, and so forth, it must be inferred that certain of the subordinates require a greater amount of time for preparation than was allowed, for the chorus was not perfect, and the band was once or twice independent of the conductor, Mr. Randegger. The untunefulness of the chorus may be attributed to unfamiliarity with their parts; the lack of precision in the band may possibly be referred to the like cause.

With the principal singers the case, as a whole, was different. Nothing could be finer than the singing and acting of Miss Minnie Hauk as *Aida*. The music suits her voice to a shade, and her genius for acting enabled her to give such point to the situations as has not yet been attained by any artist who has been seen in the part in England. Less satisfactory was the performance of Miss Yorke as Amneris, the daughter of the Pharaohs, her gestures were awkward, and her singing rather less refined than it might and ought to have been. Mr. Maas, as Rhadames, sang beautifully, and had his acting been as confident as his vocalisation nothing would have been wanting. The parts of the King and the High Priest were taken by Messrs. Conly and O'Mahoney, but each sang out of tune and, consequently, out of favour. The ballets, groupings, and so forth, were on the usual scale given at this house, the ballet of little black slaves being heartily encored as usual. The season is to close at the end of the first week in March.

Foreign Correspondence.

MUSIC IN PARIS.

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT.)

PARIS, February, 1880.

THE fifth and sixth concerts of the Conservatoire, under the conductorship of M. Altès, produced Mendelssohn's overture to *Athalie*, also three choruses from the same work, a concerto for oboe by Handel, executed by M. Gillet, a double chorus of the sixteenth century without accompaniment, "O Fijii" by Leisdring, and Beethoven's A major symphony. The conferences, held in the Conservatoire by M. Bourgault-Ducoudray, recommenced on the 29th. The music of the tenth century was discussed, and two quaint pieces for organ written at that time were well interpreted by one of the pupils of the Conservatoire. Rameau was also spoken of in this séance; but the principal composers under discussion were Chambonnieres (1610-1670) and Couperin (1668-1733), "The French Bach." Two pupils of M. Le Coupey, Mlles. Blum and Vacher-Gras, played each two pieces of the above-named composers, as illustrations, in a most correct and charming manner. In speaking of the rareness of piano-players of Chambonnieres' and Couperin's music, the lecturer, M. Bourgault-Ducoudray, observed that the voluminous and expensive character of their works might have something to do with it; the chief reason, however, he found to be that Couperin, especially, had left absolutely no guide as to time, rhythm, character, &c., and the earnest student found himself therefore in some difficulty as to the correct interpretations of this music. After speaking in eulogistic terms of Mlle. Fontaine, who had much assisted the lecturer in his researches, he wished her to illustrate the composition he was about to perform. The lady above-named then most charmingly and gracefully danced a pavane, a courante, an allemande, a sarabande, a gavotte, a minuet, a passe-pied, and a rigaudon. The characters of the pavane and sarabande were described as being religious, and in truth both these dances were danced in the churches in former times. The lecturer said the courante might be described as having an aquatic character, and its movements resembled those of a fish in the water. Their performance gave quite new ideas to the piano pieces written in these forms. The *dansuse* had the cordial applause of all present, and was congratulated by the director of the Conservatoire, M. Ambroise Thomas. This was one of the most interesting conferences of the season.

The fifteenth Châtelet Concert programme was as follows:—Symphony in F minor (for the first time) by Tschalkowsky; B. Godard's arrangement for orchestra of Schumann's charming "Kinder-scenen;" Beethoven's violin concerto, which was splendidly played by the favourite, M. Camille Sivori; a Danse des Prêtresses de Dagon le Bacchanale, from Saint-Saëns' *Samson et Dalila*; Prélude de *La Reine Berthe*, by V. Joncières; and Meyerbeer's Polonaise de Struensee. The sixteenth concert produced Berlioz's overture, "Les Francs-Juges;" and, for the first time, a symphony in A minor, by M. Saint-Saëns; by request, Gounod's "Hymne à Sainte Cécile," for all the violins; Massenet's "Les Erinnyes;" I. Prélude (Entrée des Vieillards; Apparition des Erinnyes). II. Scène religieuse; Invocation. III. Danse des Saturnales. Fragments from *Sylvia*, by Leo Delibes; and, in conclusion, Wagner's *Tannhäuser* march, which was magnificently played. The orchestra was, as usual, directed by M. Ed. Colonne.

A new society of popular concerts for modern chamber-music has been formed by M. Montardon. Eight concerts are to be given during the season, in the Salle Herz.

The thirteenth Concert Populaire, in the Cirque d'Hiver, under the conductorship of M. Padeloup, again produced *La Lyre et la Harpe*, also Beethoven's Choral Symphony. The fourteenth produced Mozart's symphony in C major; Mendelssohn's overture to *Die schöne Melusine*; "Sadko," the popular Russian legend, by Rimski-Korsakoff (of which we have already spoken in these pages); "Hymne" (Haydn), for all the stringed instruments; Beethoven's E flat major concerto for piano, performed by Mme. Essipoff; and Berlioz's overture "du Carnaval Romain."

On January 28th a concert was given in the Salle Erard by Mlle. Emilie Goldberger (from Vienna), with the co-operation of Mlle. de Varhalm, who sang some national Hungarian songs in a characteristic manner, and of MM. Coenen, Hekking, Smit, Delougue, and Selbach (cithare duosists). Beethoven's D major trio, and an arrangement for two pianos of Saint-Saëns' "La Rouet d'Omphale," were performed. The young lady pianist played soli by Bach, Rubinstein, Schubert, Scarlatti, Tausig, Weber, Saint-Saëns, Ketten, and Chopin. On the 30th of January a concert was given in the Salle Pleyel by MM. Saudou, Desjardins, Lefort, and Rabaud. On Friday, February 6th, a concert was given in the Salle Pleyel by M. Sam Franko (a German-American artist), with the co-operation of Mlle. Ella de Marcovsky, M. Coenen, and MM. Hekking and Leitert. We have already often spoken of M. Coenen's playing in these pages. He plays *en artiste* and *mit Gemüth*.

MUSIC IN NORTH GERMANY.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

LEIPZIG, February, 1880.

AFTER a lapse of several years we again heard Spohr's C minor symphony at the twelfth Gewandhaus concert. The excellence of this work ensures for it a lasting and honourable place in concert programmes, and we listened with great pleasure to its exquisite performance. Of unusually fine effect is the unison passage of the violins, violas, violoncellos, and two clarinets, introducing the second theme of the adagio, first in C major and then half a tone higher, in D flat major. Amongst the other orchestral works given on the same evening were two ballet pieces from Gluck's *Iphigénie*, which are charming, more particularly the second, a gavotte, and Haydn's C major symphony (No. 7 of Breitkopf's Edition). Mme. Amalie Joachim contributed the "Titus" aria, "Parto," by Mozart, and songs by Brahms, Dvorak, and Schubert. Unfortunately, she was not in good voice. Fräulein Agnes Zimmermann, of London, played Mendelssohn's E flat major rondo with orchestra, and, as solo pieces, prelude and fugue (E minor) by Bach, nolette (E major) by Schumann, and étude (B flat minor) by Mendelssohn.

At the thirteenth concert she gave us Bennett's C minor concerto and the solo pieces, D flat major nocturne by Chopin, gigue in B flat by Bach, and a gavotte of her own composition. At the same concert Frau Perl, of Frankfurt, gave us an indifferent rendering of the aria, "O, hör mein Flehn," from Handel's *Samson*, and songs by Schubert and Erlanger. The concert opened with a new symphony by August Reissmann, a thoroughly good and well-worked piece, and closed with the "Variations on a theme, by Haydn," by Brahms.

Two very interesting concerts, organised for the benefit of the widows and orphans of those lost in the "Brückenberger Mines," were given on the 16th and 18th January, when Herren Kapellmeister Reinecke and Concertmeister Schradieck played Beethoven's ten sonatas for piano and violin, five at each concert. Rendered to perfection by two such first-rate musicians, they naturally elicited great praise and sympathy.

An excellent rendering of Beethoven's brilliant F major symphony formed the opening of the fourteenth Gewandhaus concert, followed by two songs for mixed chorus by Robert Schumann, well sung by the Gewandhaus chorus. The second of these, "Das Schifflein," with flute and horn obbligato, had to be repeated. It is one of the most charming songs that exist of this kind. A "Bacchanal," from the ballet *Achille à Scyros*, by Cherubini, which we heard for the first time, did not please us.

Heading the second part of the programme was Reinecke's charming and graceful overture to *Dame Kobold*, a work to which we still listen with as much pleasure as we did twenty-five years ago. The performance of the *Schicksalslied*, by Brahms—to our thinking his most genial creation—was excellent, with regard both to chorus and orchestra. Equally well executed by the entire stringed orchestra of the Gewandhaus were the variations from Haydn's *Kaiser* quartet. Yet, on the whole, we are not in favour of such experiments. The end of this somewhat mixed programme was the Dervishes' chorus, Turkish march, and the solemn march and chorus from Beethoven's *Ruins of Athens*.

The fifteenth Gewandhaus concert opened with Mozart's overture to the *Magic Flute*, and ended with his G minor symphony. Herr Kapellmeister Reinecke played his second piano concerto (E minor) admirably. His other solos consisted of a transcription of the larghetto from the D major concerto by Mozart for piano alone, and the rondo, "Alla turca." Unbounded applause and repeated calls followed these performances. The vocalist, Fräulein Marie Schmidlein, of Berlin, also made a very good impression, although her choice of an aria from *Catharina Cornaro*, by Franz Lachner, was not exactly a happy one. She had greater success, with her fine and well-schooled voice, in three songs by Holstein, Schumann, and Reinecke.

The fifth chamber-music concert at the Gewandhaus commenced with Beethoven's G major trio (Op. 9) for string instruments, followed by the sextet for string instruments (Op. 36) in G major, by Brahms. The first movement of this work, played here for the first time, pleased us much, but the other movements less. Reinecke ended the concert with Mozart's quintet for piano and wind instruments, a work of which the brilliant beauty was displayed to the greatest advantage by the interpretation given by Reinecke and his colleagues.

Herr Walter's third symphony-soirée produced in orchestral works, Schumann's first symphony in B flat major, Jadassohn's third serenade in A major, Mendelssohn's overture to the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, "Waldweben," from Wagner's *Siegfried*, and *Slavische Tänze*, by Dvorak, all of which works were well given.

The eighth Euterpe concert brought forward Raff's fourth symphony in G minor, of which work the first movement and the scherzo again pleased us immensely. Of the symphony, "Romeo and Juliet," by Berlioz, given at the end of the concert, only the larghetto interested us. A pianist, with good technique, Fräulein Zelia Moriamé, of Brussels, played Schumann's A minor concerto and solos by Scarlatti, Schumann, and Chopin. At times, however, her rendering, though good, was impaired by taking the tempi too quickly.

The first concert of the "Riedel'sche Verein" fell on the 1st of February, when, amongst many other works, Bach's eight-voice motet for two choruses *d capella*, "Komm, Jesu, komm," was very successfully given. At the same concert, the excellent violoncellist, Herr Julius Klengel, played an adagio by Handel and a pretty largo of his own composition. This young artist ranks amongst the most conspicuous violoncellists of the present day.

MUSIC IN VIENNA.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

VIENNA, February 12th, 1880.

THE concert of January 18th was announced as the last in that month, for the Carnival arrangements were supposed to become predominant. So I wrote in my last report, and so I believed, but, alas! I was disappointed. Each day we had a concert, sometimes two or even three, and all amidst a Carnival of the shortest. I begin with Herr Joachim, the high-priest of classic music. The first concert (the above-mentioned) and the last he gave in the great Musikverein's Concert Room, with orchestra, the second at Bösendorfer's Saloon. We heard the violin concertos by Beethoven, Spohr (9th and 8th), Brahms (conducted by the composer), the new variations, the adagio from the Hungarian Concerto, Schumann's sonata in A minor, the quatuor in E minor by Beethoven (with Hellmesberger, &c.), and many smaller pieces. The excellent artist achieved a series of triumphs, heartily offered and, I hope, heartily received by him. He left Vienna with Brahms on a concert-tour through Galicia.

The third concert of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde took place during the Carnival. Handel's *Messiah* is not fit for such a time. The rehearsals even were at disadvantage, for they had to be undertaken while the preparations for balls in the same great concert-room were being made. However, things went bravely, and the performance was a boon for all the lovers of that gigantic style of music. The soli were sung by members of the Hofoper, the chorus was that of the Singverein. Herr Kremser, concert-director of the society, conducted. The choruses—as for instance, "Glory to God," "Lift up your heads," "Worthy is

the Lamb," and, of course, the "Hallelujah"—went exceedingly well. The *Messiah* was heard in Vienna back to 1874 (Hofoper, Academy for the Pensionsfond) and 1862 (Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, the fiftieth celebration of its foundation).

The chamber-music concerts have ceased and three quartet-unions have closed their performances. Two performances by Hellmesberger are still expected. A concert of two of the most active members of the Wiener-Wagnerverein, Herren Baumgartner and Mottl, brought forward Liszt's "Hungaria" and a selection from Wagner's *Siegfried*, both arranged for two pianos; Schubert's "Forellen" quintetto; and scena from *Benvenuto Cellini*, by Berlioz. The Wagnerverein itself had a private soirée, with a sonata in A by Bach for violin and piano; the quartet-fragment in C minor by Schubert; two movements of a new symphony by Anton Bruckner, the Court-organist; Nornen-scene from the *Götterdämmerung*; and "Tonbild," from *Siegfried*.

Herr Scharwenka, the famous and amiable pianist, gave a second concert, this time in the same concert-room as the above-named artists. His programme was the following:—Beethoven, sonata (Op. 57); Chopin, scherzo (Op. 20), and Polonaise in A flat (Op. 53); three pieces by himself—minuetto (Op. 49), two Polish dances (Op. 3), and étude (Op. 27); Schumann, "Carnaval" (Op. 9); and Liszt, Polonaise. I was not able to be present myself, but I heard, and there was no doubt, that Herr Scharwenka showed himself again to be a versatile and eminent pianist, and that he was received with the greatest applause. It was regretted by many that he was too chary of introducing his own excellent compositions. You will kindly excuse any further mention of the rest of the concerts, as there is still something to say of the opera.

Mme. Adeline Patti finished a Gastspiel of eight representations in the Ringtheater (formerly Komische Oper). The celebrated singer performed Violetta (three times), Lucia, Rosina (three times), and Leonore. True, she can still claim to be the first living artist, and if also there is some weakness in her voice, her exquisite art covers all defects and makes ample amends. The house was always filled when she appeared, the applause general and hearty. The impresario, however, had a loss of 6,000 florins by the engagement; for though the whole receipts were 40,000 florins, Mme. Patti and Sig. Nicolini received per evening 8,000 francs in gold, and the result was a loss to the undertaker. Sig. A. Broggi was the only member of the company worth notice, the rest were below mediocrity.

The Hofoper can look back with pride at the Mozart Festival recently concluded. There were altogether no first-rate representations, but every one did his best, and no hindrance or great obstacle disturbed the serenity of the celebration. The operas were given in chronological order: *Idomeneo*, *Entführung aus dem Serail*, *Hochzeit des Figaro*, *Don Juan*, *Così fan tutte* (*So machen es Alle*; or, *Weibertreue*), *Zauberflöte*, *Titus*. The last two were changed out of their right places, to give room to an after-play, an epilogue with "Lebenden Bildern" (tableaux), representing Mozart as a child, performing in the presence of the Empress; as a young man, going with his bride to the altar; in Prague, engaged in writing the overture to *Don Giovanni*; upon his death-bed, listening to his friends singing a part of his Requiem, and concluding with the Apotheosis. The whole was accompanied by the orchestra, the music chosen out from such portions of Mozart's works as are the most familiar to all. This was excellently done, with true artistic taste, by our Kapellmeister at the Hofoper, Herr Doppler; the tableaux being really admirable. The epilogue by Weilen was spoken by Fräulein Wessely and Herr Lewinsky, from the Hof-Burgtheater. The audience left the house in an elevated frame of mind. The whole series of operas was undertaken by subscription, and so great was the demand that not a seat was to be had, even the Stehplätze being filled with visitors, who suddenly remembered that the child of Salzburg was a great man, whom the world delighted to honour. One of the best results of the undertaking was that such operas as *Don Juan*, *Figaro*, and *Zauberflöte*, hitherto somewhat neglected in the representation, received more attention, which may serve as a pattern; and, secondly, that the lovely *Entführung* and *Così fan tutte* were awakened to new life. Of *Idomeneo* and *Titus* the present generation knows little or

nothing. In the list of the performers Frau Lucca, Frl. Bianchi, and Frau Schuch-Proska must be mentioned particularly, as without their co-operation the whole festival would have been an impossibility; particularly Frau Lucca, as Desjuna in *Così fan tutte*, was most excellent in singing and acting, the whole representation of that opera being one of the best. The *Zauberflöte* was also very good. Frl. Bianchi, who will be from April 1st a member of the Hofoper, performed, before leaving Vienna, Juliet in Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet*, a rôle which suited her most happily.

Operas performed in the Hofoper from January 12th to February 12th:—*Faust* (twice), *Häusliche Krieg* (and the ballet *Dyellak*), *Judin*, *Goldenes Kreuz* (and the ballet *Naila*), *Mozart-Cyclus: Idomeneo, Entführung, Hochzeit des Figaro, Don Juan, Così fan tutte, Zauberflöte, Titus, Tannhäuser, Afrikanerin, Romeo and Juliet, Lucia, Lohengrin, Carmen, Freischütz.*

Correspondence.

To the Editor of the MONTHLY MUSICAL RECORD.

SIR,—Readers of your journal who, like myself, have always had confidence in the fairness and impartiality of the *MUSICAL RECORD*, are disappointed to find, in your last number, an article, which, under the heading "Music in Scotland," gives a misleading idea of what has been going on in Glasgow. The article referred to appears to have been prepared in the interests of the promising young pianist, Miss Hopekirk. But it contains a passage (paraphrased from a notice of the one concert at which she appeared), which makes our local critics answerable for an implied slight to Mr. Manns. It is true that Beethoven's works have this winter bulked largely in our concert scheme, and that the excellent idea of producing Beethoven's nine symphonies in chronological order was excellently carried out under Mr. Manns' direction. It is also true that the writer, to whom special reference seems to be made, did say that Mr. Manns' strength as an interpreter is most conspicuous in his conception of Beethoven. But it is not true that either this or, as far as I am aware, any other local critic "said that Mr. Manns was only at home in Beethoven's music." So far from this being the case, special attention was drawn to the rendering of Schubert's *Resamunde* music and unfinished *minor Symphony*, the first of which was said to be the finest ever heard here, or perhaps elsewhere. Goetz's *Symphony in F*, given for the first time in Glasgow, was performed in a manner beyond praise. Your correspondent appears to have limited his investigation of our musical doings to the one concert in which Miss Hopekirk made her appearance, as he would not otherwise have fallen into his present mistake. The great musical success of the recent concerts here would certainly have been impossible had not the conductor been a man of wide musical sympathy and culture.

Glasgow, Feb. 8th, 1880.

Y.

[The impression intended to be conveyed by our correspondent was that Mr. Manns was "best" at home in Beethoven's music, and this we conceive to imply a very high compliment to him.—ED. M.M.R.]

Reviews.

Schumann's Symphonies. Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4. Arranged for the pianoforte by ERNST PAUER. London: Augener & Co.

ONLY those acquainted with the original orchestral scores can rightly assess the value of the work which Mr. Pauer has done in the present instance. The task of reducing to its elements in black and white, as it were, the constituent parts of each symphony is no small or easy matter. It is as difficult as that imposed upon the engraver who is called upon to give a copy in one medium of a picture whose chief quality consists less in the beauty and symmetry of the drawing than in the richness and contrast of the colouring. To give anything like a faithful transcript of the wealth of tone in a Schumann symphony, by means of a pianoforte arrangement, would be impossible; all that can reasonably be expected is that it should give a reasonable idea of the construction, the form, and the instrumental figuration. If this is done with any degree of fidelity the credit due to the doer is proportionately increased

To Mr. Pauer should be offered the best commendation, inasmuch as he has succeeded in producing fair and praiseworthy reproductions of these master-works of Schumann's hand, which present to the mind of the hearer acquainted with the character and intricacies a tolerably faithful transcript of their effects, without being overloaded with work difficult to play and comparatively ineffective when played. The readers of the *MONTHLY MUSICAL RECORD* scarcely need to be reminded of the analyses of the four symphonies which have appeared in its pages, as they form one of the many memorable series of articles which have adorned its pages. Neither is it necessary to give a detailed description of the present arrangements, for the price at which they are issued—cheaper, it is said, than any work as yet attempted of the kind—the form in which they appear, and their value for the purposes of reference and study, will speak for themselves, and that eloquently.

Sechzehn Polnische Nationaltänze (Polish National Dances) für das Pianoforte, von XAVER SCHARWENKA. London: Augener & Co.

TWO of these brilliant pieces have been already arranged as duets for the pianoforte by the composer himself, and numbered as Op. 34. These are included in the present collection of sixteen pieces, and stand as Nos. 9 and 10. As examples of the peculiarities of rhythmical variety and sequence they are altogether most praiseworthy, and their appearance in the present form will be considered as a great boon by those to whom the study of national dance forms proves interesting. This is, however, not the highest point from which these compositions should be regarded. They have special claims to notice as pieces written for the pianoforte according to modern ideas. Herr Scharwenka, in all his writings, shows how completely he has mastered the difficulty of writing reasonably and intelligently for pianoforte players, not placing great obstacles in their path as though for the mere pleasure of bringing them to a sudden and ignominious halt, as is the wont of many writers. Neither does he delight in furnishing his themes with passages troublesome to play, and uninteresting or trivial when given, however neatly accomplished. Every part has a distinct meaning and intention, and appears to be written with as much care and consideration as that which usually influences the thoughtful painter, who seeks to make all his detail, however trivial, not only subservient but actually contributory to the general effect. Another matter in connection with these Polish dances will probably also strike the observant critic, and that is Herr Scharwenka's contribution towards the advancement of art. There may be traced throughout the several pieces gentle hints as to novelties in effects, which will probably in time become developed into recognised and recognisable shape. It is to the earnest efforts of the true artist that the world is indebted for the suggestion of some of the most perfect forms of enjoyment. All genius is concentrating, and to a certain extent prophetic. A man is noted in his time as being above all the rest in a particular line, not always because he has invented more than his neighbours so much as because he possesses the power of expressing in the form most acceptable, and in the readiest fashion, all the yearnings after a higher ideal which all feel and all are striving after. This was so with the great masters of days gone by, and this is so with Herr Scharwenka. His music cannot be read or played carefully without impressing the hearer that there is in it something beyond the efforts of the generality of pianoforte writers, something which all can appreciate, but most will contend belongs to a higher order of musicians, or to a state not yet reached by the present generation, although perfectly within their ken.

Fünfzehn Zweistimmige Inventionen. Fifteen Two-part Inventions. By J. S. BACH. Edited by JOHN FARMER. London: Augener & Co.

THE famous two-part inventions of Bach need no special eulogy at this time or in this place. All that may be done now is to call attention to the fact that Mr. Farmer has, in the present cheap and beautifully-printed edition, added the proper direc-

tions for fingering, given the approximate *tempi* of the several pieces, and suggested adequate marks of expression. He has also added a preface, in which he gives a few concise directions as to the manner in which the pieces should be played, and the order in which they may be profitably studied. This constitutes the reason for a hearty recommendation of this edition, as it is especially valuable for educational purposes.

Jugendlust (Youth's Delight). Walzer, Op. 103. By CORNELIUS GURLITT. London: Augener & Co.

THE more that is seen of the music of this composer, the greater the amount of admiration for his talents that is likely to be aroused. He possesses the happy but not common gift of being able to express in the simplest form, and by the easiest means, the most complete musical picture, drawn with freedom, and coloured in an original and pleasing form. The present little piece exhibits the author's capability also of utilising a phrase so as to make its repetitions serve the sequence of a melody, and contribute to the variety needful to produce a charm. He does not write as every one else would be likely to do, but gives out his theme after an introduction, which might not be so well managed by a less thoughtful and clever writer. Thus the piece under notice, though in the key of C, starts with a chord of D minor, and reaches the dominant without modulation in a daring, but in his hands a seemingly natural way, fully characteristic of the absence of set purpose which might be supposed to influence the vagaries of youth, and to be part of the delight of juvenescence. Be the reason what it may, the music is good, and by no means beset with technical trouble to hinder the performance by the tyro.

Three Movements for the Pianoforte. By F. W. HIRD. London: Weekes & Co.

WHETHER the pieces above-named are judged by their musical worth, or by the sentiments exhibited, and, it may be, also excited in the mind of the reader, is no matter, for in either case will they stand successfully any reasonable test to which they may be put. The first—a Canzonetta in E major—has a pleasing melody, gracefully yet simply harmonised; the second is a Scherzo in C, lively and dashing, but scarcely so original in idea and form as the piece which precedes or that which follows it. This latter—the third piece—called a Burlesca, is really and truly so in the strictest sense of the term. It is further called "Un rêve d'un bon vivant;" and the theme is the famous tune "Marlbrook," better known now by association with the words "We won't go home till morning." This the composer has treated fugally with very quaint counterpoint and episodal passages, which the late John Farry would have called "con molto staggioso," perfectly characteristic, and naturally appearing to grow out of the theme. They are three very cleverly contrived pieces, forming, if they are taken as a whole, a musical representation of the average character of most summer outings or "day's pleasure," the first exhibiting the unaffected enjoyment of the rest, holiday, and change of scene; the second, the natural hilarity arising out of the pleasure derived, and a little extra indulgence in the good things provided; the last showing the common result, and the customary conclusion. Whether this thought or plan occurred to the composer or not is of no consequence; the music is ably written, even if it does suggest ideas which might not be deemed compatible with the nature of music generally.

Three Sonatinas. Composed by C. REINECKE, Op. 47. New Edition, revised by the Author. London: Augener & Co. THE re-publication of these already popular sonatinas in a new form is likely to extend their usefulness, more particularly when it is said that they have been carefully revised by the composer, and that the marks for fingering have been supplied according to the English custom and practice. As a preparation for the avowedly greater works of the classical composers, they are invaluable, containing, as they do, some clever but not obtrusive suggestions of those characteristic qualities which are expected, if not actually found, in works belonging to the sonata kind.

The form adopted is that known as the sonata form in its simplest and therefore, for students, its most understandable shape. The passages employed are in no way out of the reach of young players, and the general style of the three pieces, such as would rejoice the hearts of earnest teachers to see more constantly represented in music, is intended to lead and direct young minds in the paths of good taste.

Grateful Tasks (Erholungsstunden). Twenty-six Original Pieces in all the Major and Minor Keys, the Melodies constructed upon Five Notes. Pianoforte Duets by CORNELIUS GURLITT. Op. 102. London: Augener & Co.

THE ingenuity, taste, and judgment expressed in these little duets entitle them to the warmest recognition. There is no doubt that they will meet with a large success. They deserve to supersede everything of the kind previously existing, because they provide the very thing all teachers long for, but have neither time nor inclination to supply themselves. The employment of the hands without shifting from one position will doubtless be attractive to the young pupil, who will, moreover, be incited to industry in order to learn more of the simple yet fascinating melodies. Another advantage likely to accrue will be found in the opportunity offered for accustoming the young player to the variety of rhythms as well as variety of keys, and so he will be led on, almost insensibly, to master the intricacies of time and to read readily the relative value of the several notes. The exercises commence in the key of C in the most simple form for the first player. The part for the second player is a little more difficult, and is not confined to the like limit as the first. A considerable amount of variety in harmonies, in figures of imitation, and so forth, give a special piquancy to the pieces, and make them so interesting, that the narrow limit of the melody does not appear in any way defective. The exercises are set out in the whole of the major and minor keys in a regular gradation, sharps first and then flats, and the order of difficulty is also maintained or continued in the character of the exercises. The idea of the whole of the work seems to be to lead, by almost insensible steps, toward the conquest of the troubles of fingering. An attention to the expression indicated, and an accurate observance of the rhythm, will justify the title selected for these useful aids to study, and both master and pupil will consider the exercises truly as "grateful tasks."

Christmas Eve. A short Cantata by NIELS W. GADZ. London: Novello & Co.

THIS is an interesting vocal work of that modesty of extent which forms its best introduction to choral societies. It is dramatic in structure and detail. A short introduction leads to a solo for "The Seraph," who, addressing the hosts of angels, informs them of the important event about to take place at the period indicated by the title. The songs of the angels are heard by the shepherds tending their flocks, and the union of earthly and heavenly voices forms the first chorus, "Behold, a star appeareth." The seraph again sings of the hope to fallen mankind which the appearance of the star foreshadows, and then a chorus of praise breaks forth, as it were, and arouses the prophetic utterances of the seraph with respect to the effect of the coming of the Holy One on earth. A short alto solo, expressing hope and comfort at the Saviour's birth, precedes a chorus of thanksgiving and promise, with which the work ends. The music aims at simplicity in the vocal parts, and in the desire to obtain tunelessness hints at, if it does not actually reproduce, some of the *volkslied* form of melody, which, however, does not detract from the earnestness of the purposes, or weaken the effect obtained. The accompaniment, reduced from the score, not particularly easy, demands the hand of a skilful pianist. It is independent, in a great measure, from the voice parts, and would require revision if the work comes to be used as an anthem in church. The import of the words, and the nature of the subject would prove sufficient excuse to those who are always eager to find a place for such cantatas, as an aid to the Church's ritual, whether the words be in exact conformity with

accepted teaching in authorised books set forth to be used in divine service or not.

Little Snow-white (Sneewittchen). Words by HERMANN FRANCKE. English Version by Miss E. M. TRAQUAIR. Music composed by FRANZ ABT. London: Augener & Co.

THE story or plot upon which this charming little lyric is based is not altogether unknown to English readers who are acquainted with Grimm's fairy tales, neither will it appeal in a musical form for the first time to them, as it has been set by Herr Carl Reinecke in almost the same fashion, or, at all events, to suit the like character of voices. The poem supplied in the present case is by Hermann Francke, the English translation of which has been made by Miss Traquair, with a considerable amount of taste of knowledge of all that is needed to make an interesting and fit version, so that the hearers may not be offended by halting verses, or the singers puzzled by words of wrong accent. The whole cantata is adapted to be sung by female voices, and the accompaniment is arranged for the piano in a form by no means difficult.

There are eight musical numbers in all:—1. A chorus, "In the forest," with a short introduction and a solo for Snow-white. 2. A solo for mezzo-soprano, "In the cottage of the Demon Dwarfs." 3. A concerted piece, "Deep in mountain gloom," for Snow-white and the Dwarfs, in three-part harmony. 4. A chorus with solos for "the Wicked Queen." 5. "Snow-white's happy life." 6. Duet for the Queen and Snow-white. 7. "The Dwarfs' Lament" for the death of Snow-white, poisoned by the Wicked Queen. 8. A finale descriptive of joy at the failure of the Wicked Queen's design. The character of the design may be inferred from the sequence of the pieces which illustrate the story. Certain verses designed to make this entirely clear are supplied in the books of words. These are intended to be recited when the work is performed, and the interest of the music thereby enhanced. What the character of this music is may be stated in a very few words, although it may be considered almost superfluous to offer words of praise for the beauty of the melodies and the fitness for performance and study, when it is known that the work is the production of Franz Abt, who has, during a long series of years, furnished the lovers of "sweet airs and melodious strains" with food for delight. It will suffice to say that the present work is equal with, if not superior to, his former efforts, and will make such an addition to the list of music capable of being useful to classes in which female voices are chiefly available, as will be especially valuable and interesting.

Six Romances from Tieck's "Magelone." By Johannes Brahms. London: Augener & Co.

IT is difficult to say which one out of the six pieces here contained within one cover is best entitled to admiration for its qualities. Tried by the title given to them, that marked No. 6 might possibly be considered as worth the highest commendation. The second piece might also be looked upon as containing most of the essence of that particular power which gives its author an ascendancy over the many modern musicians of which he is one. It is for the poetical character which pervades the greater number of the works of Brahms that his superiority may be asserted. This poetical quality finds its happiest exposition in the six pieces now under notice. They are not mere melodies, with guitar-like accompaniments. The words enforce the character of the music as the music is an exact exposition of the sentiments of the words. The one is part of the other, and an integral portion of an indivisible whole. With many vocal pieces the song line attached to words, or the contrary, may be learned without effort or difficulty. It may be retained upon the memory, and will have as much effect without the accompaniment as with it. To separate the several items forming the whole, in the present case, without detriment to the effect, would be impossible, and herein lies the skill of the artist in thus forming and writing these Romances. Herein also lies the difficulty in the way of their popularity. They are written for a higher order of intellect and power of appreciation, and have little or nothing which the ordinary mind can find any charm in.

They must be played by, sung by, and performed to and for the benefit of those who can value the effort of the poet musician at its due worth. With such the "Six Romances" will find high favour. The number of appreciative and sympathetic musicians is happily not a very restricted or narrow one, although they are by no means so numerous as those who care most for a sequential melody without reference to any artistic design the composer may have.

Songs of Peace and Joy. Words by the late FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL. Music by C. H. PURDAY. Second Edition. London: James Nisbet & Co.

THE spirit which the composer of these songs, over thirty in number, exhibits is entitled to all consideration; regarded as efforts of the heart, they will doubtless find a ready response in many hearts. For this reason it may not be well to criticise the effort too closely, or to call the author to blame for the lack of originality, either in form or melody, which appears in many of the pieces printed in the book. They serve the purpose claimed for them, and are entitled to a considerable amount of respect for the desire to "glorify the faithful God who has led the author for more than twice forty years through the wilderness."

One thing may be mentioned with regard to the construction of the melodies, namely, that they are all within a moderate compass, and that the harmonies are simple, and such as make no great demands on the executive powers of ordinary players.

The words are beautiful, and have already earned a good place in the esteem of those for whom lyrics on religious subjects have a particular charm.

Dictionary of Music and Musicians. Part 9. Edited by GEORGE GROVE, LL.D. London: Macmillan & Co.

THIS ninth part, delayed in publication in order to complete the biographical notice of Mendelssohn, has now appeared, and sufficiently atones by the excellence of its contents for the tardiness of its appearance. The conclusion of the article "Mendelssohn," which in this part occupies over fifty pages, forms, with that which has preceded, one of the most interesting biographies of the much-loved musician which has yet appeared. It not only exhibits him as a musician, but also brings out most strongly his amiable character as a man. Side by side with a thematic catalogue of his works, with the dates of production, performance, or publication, which at present, unfortunately, does not exist, this notice of Mendelssohn would be the most complete as it is the most interesting, fair, and just account of his life and works now before the public. The account contains, it is true, as much as the student may be required to know, but not so much as he may desire to become acquainted with as regards the history of his works. Among the other articles in this part, those relating to ecclesiastical music are marked by the same dry accuracy, and eccentricities of spelling, as heretofore, the blot upon the neatness and formality of the articles. There are well-written articles on Modulation, Monteverde, Mordent, Morley, Mott, and the commencement of what promises to be an interesting and carefully-written life of Mozart. Neither of the tunes given *sub voce* "Morris dance" is correctly noted. In the first, the so-called Cheshire Morris dance, the rhythm is all wrong and contains a bar too little; the Yorkshire dance, which ought to have been in 6-8 time, is more likely to have furnished the melody for the comic song, "The Literary Dustman," than the reverse, as the author has stated. The remainder of the articles are of the average type and quality.

MINOR ITEMS.

Instructive Selections from Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven, by J. ESCHMANN. Edited by J. FARMER. Books 3 and 4. London: Augener & Co. Two more books of these selections, carefully edited, and as carefully and as well printed as the former numbers previously noticed in this journal, have been issued, so that the whole of this interesting and useful collection of pieces is brought nearer to completion. They are intended to smooth and prepare the way towards perfection in playing, and

are well adapted to bring about that desirable end.—101 *Exercises*, or *Elementary Studies*, for the Pianoforte, by CHARLES CZERNY. London: Augener & Co. Few elementary works written for the use of students of the pianoforte have achieved so wide a popularity as these famous exercises. They are still constantly employed as a means of giving power to the fingers, and as serving as an introduction to the great works of the recognised classical authors. It is therefore with more than ordinary pleasure that attention is called to this new edition, which is well and clearly printed, furnished with the most careful indications of the fingering after the English fashion that need be desired, and, above all, is offered at a price so cheap that it is at the rate of more than six exercises for a penny. Here is cheap and good music to a certainty, for it is doubtful if the force of cheapness could any further go.—*Blue-eyes*, song, by C. H. SHEPHERD, transcribed for the pianoforte by LÉON D'OURVILLE (Augener & Co.) is a brilliantly written piece, containing no very great difficulties, and much that is attractive. Nos. 16, 17, and 18 of the string of *Perles de Salon*, also by Léon D'Ourville, are the "Mermaid's Song," from *Oberon*; the "Slumber Song," from Auber's *Masaniello*; and "Se il fratel Stringere," from Donizetti's *Belisario*—all set in a fashion which makes them available as reminiscences of the melodies where singers are not to be obtained, as well as useful for teaching purposes, for which they may be said to be especially adapted.—*La Napolitaine*, Etude de Salon, pour piano, by MAURICE LEE (Augener & Co.), is a graceful piece of writing, free, flowing, and with a peculiar *abandon* and impetus, such as might be supposed to influence the character of the melodies and music of the sunny South.—*An Evening Thought*, song without words, by Sir JULIUS BENEDICT (Augener & Co.), is another form of the little piece for pianoforte already noticed in these columns, as arranged for violoncello and pianoforte. The present, presumably the original form, is an elegant little composition of a character always welcome to players and to hearers.—The short transcriptions entitled the *Wreath of Songs*, by D. KRUG (Augener & Co.), have had their number augmented by the addition of two pieces, forming Nos. 11 and 12, which have already earned a wide popularity in other shapes. The first, "A Cottage by the Sea," a ballad by J. R. Thomas, has earned a world-wide fame as a song, and there are few of Pearsall's compositions so well known as the air associated with his name as "The Hardy Norseman," which, first printed in Hullah's *Manual of Singing*, nearly forty years ago, has never lost a jot of the popularity it achieved when first known. These two works have been arranged for the present series of pieces with skill and taste, and a considerable regard to the requirements of both pupils and teachers, and are therefore likely to earn a new lease of popularity in a different direction from that which they have already enjoyed.—The popularity of Goetz's opera, *The Taming of the Shrew*, has given rise to a variety of arrangements of the several *morceaux* therein contained. We now call attention with pleasure to the *pot-pourri* so cleverly done by JOSEF LÖW, for harmonium, in which a goodly selection of the leading melodies are woven into a continuous piece, in which the contrasts of key and character are most ingeniously set forth.

Concerts.

CRYSTAL PALACE CONCERTS.

THE Saturday concerts were resumed upon the anniversary of the birth of Franz Schubert, on January 31st. It was therefore natural that a sort of Schubert festival should be held on that occasion. The time was appropriate enough, and the place was especially so, as it was chiefly owing to Mr. George Grove, sometime secretary of the Crystal Palace, that Schubert's genius was fully recognised in England. The selection of music made for this timely celebration was a good one, as showing the peculiar bent of the genius of the composer, but it was wanting in the variety which is always looked for in most concert programmes, and which is always commendable where diverse tastes have to be provided for. The concert opened with an *introduction* and *allegro* from the Symphony No. 1, which is still in MS. It was completed on the 28th October, 1813, when Schubert was yet in his seventeenth year,

and is a most interesting example of his work at that period. It tells more of the influence of the thoughts of Haydn and Beethoven over the mind of the young composer than of any expressed power of originality. It possesses, however, sufficient claim to consideration from the admirers of Schubert to prompt them to ask for the performance of the remainder of the work at a convenient opportunity. At the conclusion of this extract, Miss Lilian Bailey sang "Du bist die Ruh" and "Lachen und Weinen," accompanied on the piano by Herr Henschel; this being done, Herr Henschel took his turn as a singer, his two pieces being "Memnon" and "Geheimes," with the accompaniments arranged for an orchestra by Brahms. A selection from the music to "Rosamunde" was now given, including the Entr'actes Nos. 1 and 2, the Romance, "Der Vollmond," sung by Miss Bailey, the Shepherd melody, scored for two clarinets, two bassoons, and two horns, a quaint melody on a pedal B flat; the Ballet air in G is already a favourite here, and so beautifully played as to win new admirers among those who heard it for the first time.

Herr Henschel sung the "Erl King," accompanied by Herr Frantzen, and the glorious symphony in C, No. 9, concluded the concert. The performance of this masterpiece was in every respect worthy of the work, reflecting great credit upon the band (who, in one or two cases in the earlier pieces, were not so careful as they might have been), and winning bright honour for the conductor, Mr. Manns, who was received upon his return upon the orchestra with considerable warmth.

It is by no means a common thing to find an instrumental piece by the composer of *Travatore* figuring in a concert programme. Vocal pieces by him are frequently given with more or less effect, but there are very few detached pieces of purely instrumental music by the great musician available for the purposes of performance independent of the opera. The concert of Saturday, February 7th, opened with an overture to an opera, *Aroldo*, by Verdi, written in 1857, which is bright, tuneful, and effective, but it is calculated to please better as theatre music than as music for the concert room. It was brilliantly played, but somehow it failed to interest the majority of the audience present, for their tastes did not lean in the direction of that style of music.

After the overture, Mendelssohn's octet in E flat for all the strings was played in the finest possible fashion. The excellent worth of the performance must be acknowledged, even though opinion may be reserved as to the propriety of magnifying these small works by increasing the number of performers to each part. The octet is in that happy vein of thought which Mendelssohn possessed when his mind was full of Shakespeare, and when he was longing to show his appreciation of the great poet by expressing his impressions in music, which he did, as every one knows, in the most charming and beautiful manner.

At this concert Mlle. Janotha was the pianist, and her performance of Beethoven's E flat concerto awakened the highest admiration. She also played three pieces for pianoforte alone, by Schumann, Mendelssohn, and Chopin, her interpretation of the first-named being, perhaps, the most genial. The concluding pieces were the "Danse des Sylphes" and "Marche Rakoczy," from *La Damnation de Faust*, by Berlioz. The *danse* was most calculated to please, for the Hungarian theme, and above all its treatment by Berlioz, is more eccentric than satisfying.

Madame Sinico was the vocalist.

On February 14th Miss Dora Schirmacher was the pianist, and gave a truly artistic and intelligent reading of Beethoven's Concerto No. 4, in G major (Op. 58), such as to delight all connoisseurs, and charm those who take pleasure in music without any knowledge of its scientific bearing. In her solos by Schumann and Chopin she exhibited that graceful intelligence and finish of manipulation which makes all the difference between an acceptable and an indifferent interpretation.

The Dramatic Symphony of Rubinstein, which commenced the concert, is more interesting as an example of the ingenuity of musical construction than either of beauty or brevity. It is therefore better calculated to please the studious musician than the mere amateur. Even for the musician the length of the work is almost too great a strain upon the attention. The most earnest student can scarcely keep his mind open to the reception of distinct impressions of new efforts in music for so long a time as Rubinstein demands in this work without displacing some that are half-formed or undeveloped. It would therefore be better to give the work in instalments, objectionable as such a practice would be in a general way. There is so much merit, so much that ought to be remembered in Rubinstein's Dramatic Symphony, that this course would seem to be the best one if it is desirable that a favourable opinion should be conceived of its merits.

The overture to *Oberon*, which ended the concert, was greatly enjoyed, as it ought to have been, for it was beautifully played. Mrs. Osgood, who was the vocalist, sang a scena from *Tannhäuser*,

and two new songs of considerable talent, if not very powerfully original, by Miss Maude White, the present holder of the Mendelssohn Scholarship at the Royal Academy of Music, who accompanied the singer on the pianoforte.

On the 21st February the programme included the first of Beethoven's symphonies, which it is proposed to give in chronological sequence on the remaining Saturdays of the present series of concerts. It was this work which gave great relief to a performance which was otherwise somewhat dull and heavy. As a matter of fact the programmes have lately been gradually drifting into ponderosity. Probably this arises from a wish to counterbalance the light and uninteresting music ordinarily introduced by the vocalists, or it may be in deference to the desires of a certain section of the *habitués* whose tastes are not equal to the appreciation of the more solid fare. This style of music has of course been commented upon as out of character with the declared or attained mission of the scheme, but it is productive of a result which may be considered as quipouise if not "just measure of good quality."

The art of framing a programme has never received better illustration than in the programmes of the Crystal Palace Concerts of a past time. The judicious admixture of the light with the heavy, the contrast afforded by the introduction of good works of opposite character, the cosmopolitan taste in the production of examples of various schools of thought in music, form the truest models for such pattern concerts. The recent selections have accidentally exhibited a leaning towards the emanations of one particular school, of which it may be said that although all may admit its claims to consideration at reasonable times, it may be a little injudicious to introduce too much at one time, especially when there is variety of taste to cater for. The symphony of Beethoven, on Saturday, shone like a beacon-light over a storm-troubled ocean. Bazzini's overture to *King Lear* is doubtless a clever and interesting work; but Italian composers, for all that they may adopt the style of writing affected by the so-called advanced German school, are not at ease in the expression of their ideas in a form more or less foreign to their natural inclinations. Bazzini has written some really clever music in this overture, but it is not so Italian as German. It is dramatic, and well scored, and is intended to be a picture of the chief characters, if not the incidents, in Shakespeare's play. It will doubtless satisfy some minds at first hearing, as it evidently did the judges of the *Società del Quartetto* of Milan, in 1871, for they awarded to it a first prize, but there are others who, like a portion of the audience on Saturday, would like to hear it again before pronouncing finally an opinion upon it. It would perhaps have made a more distinct impression had it appeared in another programme than that in which Brahms' concerto was introduced, for the mind refuses to take nourishment out of a surfeit of like food. The concerto alluded to is in D minor, and was first given at the Crystal Palace by Miss Baglehole nearly eight years ago. The player on the present occasion was Herr Barth, and his execution of the work was most artistic and sympathetic. His performance of two solos by Schubert and Weber was creditable to his taste and judgment. The vocalist was Mr. E. Lloyd, who sang two songs by Gluck and Schubert most sweetly. The overture to *The Flying Dutchman* ended the concert.

PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.

THE overture, "Hero and Leander," by Mr. W. Macfarren, which commenced the first concert of the society, given on February 5th, is not exactly a novelty, having been given at Brighton at one of Mr. Kuhe's Festival Concerts in 1879, for which it was written. It is excellently written, well scored, and replete with interest, and would have been equally as acceptable, and perhaps as applicable, had it been called by any other title.

Another comparative novelty was also included in the programme, a concerto for violoncello by Signor Piatti. It has been already heard at one of the Crystal Palace Concerts in 1873, but was heard for the first time in the London concert room on this occasion. As a means whereby the peculiar powers of the solo instrument are exhibited in the best form, and in contrast with orchestral colouring, the work fulfils the best conditions, more especially when it is interpreted, as on this occasion, by so thorough an expert as the composer. The solo part bristles with difficulties which were made as nothing by the wonderful skill of the player, and the effect produced upon the audience by the work was such as must have been gratifying to the artist, for the approval of so critical an audience as that ordinarily gathered together at one of these concerts is no small matter to be proud of.

Another concerto, Schumann the author, the pianoforte the vehicle, the key A minor, and the interpreter the accomplished Mme. Montigny-Rémaury, brought with it a special fund of delight, and Beethoven's symphony in A (No. 7), given *con amore* by the

fine band of the society, conducted by Mr. W. G. Cusins with his customary care and intelligence, helped the filling of a measure of enjoyment, which may be said to have been made to run over, by the addition of the charming "Frühlings" overture of Hermann Goetz, and the songs given by Miss Robertson.

Herr Scharwenka was the pianist at the concert given on Feb. 19. He introduced his own concerto in B flat minor in a style which could not fail to awaken the highest admiration. The delicacy of his touch, his power of expression, the neatness and finish of his passage playing, and, above all, the graceful style in which he brings out the various melodic themes, making them to appear as though they were sung upon the instrument, were characteristic qualities of his performance which an assembly so keenly critical as that collected to hear him could fully appreciate. The estimation of the audience was expressed in the double recall with which he was honoured. Later in the programme he played a fantasia by Chopin, Op. 49, and his own staccato study, in a truly wonderful and almost faultless fashion. The Prince of Wales, who was present at this concert, personally congratulated the accomplished artist.

The programme also included a new overture by Mr. Harold Thomas, entitled "Mountain, Lake, and Streamlet," fancifully designed, cleverly scored, and having some considerable amount of attractive melody. There is, however, little in the way of originality of invention in the work, but the effect produced was sufficient to secure a call for the author at the conclusion. Beethoven's *Eroica* symphony, admirably played, Bennett's overture, *The Naiades*, and Weber's *Der Freischütz*, with some songs by Donizetti, Mozart, and Gounod, given by Mr. Santley and Mr. Shakespeare, completed the concert, which was, as usual, conducted by Mr. W. G. Cusins with conspicuous ability.

MONDAY POPULAR CONCERTS.

ON Monday, January 26th, Dr. Hans von Bülow was the pianist, and his performance of the solos selected by him, Beethoven's C minor sonata (Op. 111) was a wonderful effort of memory as well as affording an admirable example of his powers of execution. He was recalled four times at the conclusion of his performance of this masterpiece. He also, in conjunction with Signor Piatti, obtained the honour of a double recall after the performance of the Beethoven sonata (Op. 5, No. 2) for piano and violoncello. These were not the only opportunities the audience enjoyed of hearing his versatile powers, for he took part with Mme. Norman-Néruda, Mr. Zerbini, and Signor Piatti in Rheinberger's quartet in E flat (Op. 38), which was performed for the seventh time at these concerts.

Not the least interesting feature in the programme was Haydn's string quartet in E flat (Op. 20), given here for the first time, thus making forty-eight of Haydn's quartets out of eighty-three he left behind which Mr. Chappell has produced for the delectation of his patrons. It was most beautifully played and cordially received.

Miss Amy Aylward was the vocalist on this occasion.

On the following Monday, February 2nd, Dr. Hans von Bülow was again engaged. He selected from Beethoven the solo he played, this time the Adagio and variations in F major (Op. 34), and with Mme. Norman-Néruda gave a brilliant version of a new sonata in G major by Brahms, the master almost universally accepted as Germany's actual representative musician. It is a very ably written work, full of poetical power, but it is of that kind which appeals best to a select circle of admirers whose feelings are *en rapport* with the composer and the artists who are engaged in giving life to his conception.

Dr. von Bülow also played in the final quartet, one by Mozart in G minor. The opening piece at this concert was a composition in the form of a string quartet by Cherubini, which is tolerably well known to the *habitués* of these concerts, having been played here some eight times. The performance was admirable, but the audience seemed to be indifferent to the work.

Mr. Barton McGuckin sang two songs in excellent style, "Die Allmacht," of Schubert, and a new song, by Duviour, altogether out of the common run, "The Cooing of the Dove," which Mr. Zerbini accompanied.

The concert of the 9th February was the occasion of the last appearance this season of Mme. Norman-Néruda, and was honoured by the presence of Royalty. The sextet of Brahms introduced at this concert was very finely played, and the scherzo and trio so won upon the audience that they applauded until their desire was interpreted to signify a repetition, which was accordingly given. The three pieces by Scarlatti which Mlle. Janotha played were sufficiently familiar to make an exceptional performance of them particularly welcome. It is true that two out of the three had not been heard here before, but amateurs know them and students delight in them, and all were glad to hear them so well played. Mr. Santley sang two songs by Miss White, one by Scarlatti, and

one by Gounod, which latter he repeated. The Serenade trio of Beethoven received full justice at the hands of the players.

The return of Herr Joachim to London was made at the concert of Feb. 16, when he played with Messrs. Ries, Zerbini, and Piatti, in the Beethoven quartet in E flat, Op. 74, and also in the quartet by Haydn, Op. 64, No. 2, in the same key. The first was played for the twentieth time here, the second for the third. It will be readily understood when it is said that the great violinist was received most enthusiastically, that his popularity has in no way diminished. His artistic power is as great as ever it was, and therefore his hold upon the public mind is as firm as at any time during his career. He charmed and delighted all present by a masterly performance of the prelude and fugue in G minor for violin alone by J. S. Bach, and was recalled to the platform to bow his acknowledgments of his most hearty welcome. Mlle. Janotha contributed one solo for the pianoforte, Chopin's Polonaise in F sharp minor, Op. 44, with rare delicacy and truth of expression, so that all the poetry of the composition seemed to be placed before the minds of her hearers in the most fascinating form. The vocalist was Mr. F. Boyle, the possessor of a light tenor voice, marred by a somewhat indifferent and at times unpleasing production. He sang the well-known—almost too well-known—song by Handel, "Where'er you walk," and a ditty by Gounod, "When in the early Morn."

Musical Notes.

A SERIES of nine concerts under the direction of Herr Richter will be given at some place not yet stated in the prospectus, but probably in London, commencing on May 10th.

MR. GANZ announces five orchestral concerts at St. James's Hall on Saturdays April 17th, May 1st and 29th, and June 12th and 26th. They will be similar in character to the New Philharmonic Concerts given by him last year.

THE Musical Union Matinées will take place on April 13th, 27th, May 11th, 25th, June 8th, 22nd, and 29th.

DR. ARTHUR SULLIVAN, who is at present in America, has accepted the conductorship of the Leeds Musical Festival, to be held in October next. He intends to return to England at the end of April, when he will at once begin his duties in connection with the Festival.

THE Handel Festival is fixed to take place on June 18th, 21st, 23rd, and 25th, at the Crystal Palace, Sydenham. Sir Michael Costa will be the conductor, and the musical arrangements will be in the hands of the Sacred Harmonic Society, as in former years.

WE hear that the "Requiem" of Berlioz is to be performed shortly. Also that in Passion Week the mass by Liszt for men's voices, with organ, will be given, under the direction of the composer himself. These performances are undertaken by the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, of Vienna. Brahms has returned to Vienna, having been on a tour with Joachim in Krakau, Lemberg, and elsewhere.

THE Cork Orchestral Society gave a concert on the 3rd February, the programme of which was made up entirely from the works of Irish composers—Balfé, Rooke, Moore, Stewart, John Field, Robinson, Wallace, Dr. José and Bonicelli, Italian in name but Irish by inclination, and the bandmaster of the 1st Battalion of the 9th Regiment. The whole was conducted by Mr. Ringrose Atkins; and great praise was won by Mr. Hill for his admirable performance of Field's concerto in C major.

A YOUTHFUL violinist of extraordinary promise has lately entered the Academy of Music, "St. Cecilia," in Rome. Metauridia Torricelli is the daughter of a civil engineer, residing at Fossombrone, in the Province of Pesaro-Urbino, a descendant of the distinguished inventor of the barometer, and her Christian name is derived from the lovely valley of the Metauro, which gave her birth. Although she is but thirteen years of age, and has only had three years' tuition from an excellent local master in her native town, she exhibits in her play a facility of execution, and an amount of feeling, expression, and inherent power which betoken the divine flame, and are enhanced by self-possession and by a natural grace and elegance truly Italian. She has enlisted the sympathies and won the admiration not only of amateurs but of the professor of the academy, before whom she passed the entrance examination. It was suggested to Sign. Torricelli that a concert should be arranged for her at the "Sala Dante" but he very wisely declined, knowing that nothing is more corrupting and fatal to youthful talent than premature adulation, and that after having passed through her finishing course of two years, the young violinist will have the world before her.

THE Shirley Anthem, by J. L. Hatton, recently reviewed in these pages, has been performed with great success by the Philharmonic Choir at a concert at Brighton, given by Mr. Watts.

A NEW sonata for clarinet and pianoforte by Dr. Swinnerton Heap was produced on Feb. 3rd at the third of Mr. Stratton's Chamber Concerts, Birmingham. The work was enthusiastically received.

MR. G. C. BURRY is giving an interesting series of Classical Chamber Concerts at the Sutton Public Hall. The able executants of the string quartet are—1st violin, Mr. Carl Jung, and violin, Mr. J. B. W. Thirlwall, viola, Mr. E. Deane, and violoncello, Mr. Kleine. The next concert of the series is announced for Monday, the 8th of March, at 8 p.m., when Mlle. Krebs will appear.

MR. E. PROUT's Organ Concerto was played at Brighton, on the 26th ult. Mr. King was the organist, and the composer conducted his work. The concerto was also performed at Birmingham on the same day.

MR. KUHE's Festival Concerts at Brighton commenced on Feb. 17th, and concluded on the 28th. A large number of interesting items were performed at the miscellaneous concerts, and among the greater works given were the *First Christmas Morn*, a new work by Mr. Henry Leslie; Mendelssohn's *Hymn of Praise*, Rossini's *Moses in Egypt*, Sullivan's *Prodigal Son*, Costa's *Naaman*, Beethoven's *Mount of Olives*, and Handel's *Messiah*. The whole festival was a great artistic success.

THE Rochester Choral Society gave a concert on Feb. 9th, on which occasion Mendelssohn's *Athalie*, Mr. C. Fry being the reciter, and a miscellaneous selection, including a concert overture in D, by Sir F. A. Gore Ouseley, given under the conductorship of the Rev. W. H. Nutter, were most successfully performed. Band and chorus worked well to produce a good result.

A PERFORMANCE of Schumann's *Faust* was given at the Freemasons' Hall, Edinburgh, on Feb. 15th, with considerable success, under the direction of Mr. Waddell.

THE death is announced of Honoré Grignon, at the age of eighty. Grignon was from 1836 to 1854 one of the chief performers at the Paris Opéra Comique, and his name is associated with a large number of the master-pieces of French opera produced during that period. His performance of the English nobleman, Lord Elford, in Auber's *Domino Noir*, is said to have been unapproached by any subsequent representative of the part.

JACQUES HERZ, elder brother of Henri Herz, and himself in his day a distinguished pianist, has just died at Nice, at the ripe age of eighty-six.

WE regret to announce the death, on the 22nd inst., of Mr. James Coward, in the fifty-sixth year of his age. Mr. Coward had been the organist of the Crystal Palace ever since the erection of the large organ on the Handel orchestra in 1857, and he was also well known as the composer of several popular glees and part-songs.

APPOINTMENTS.—Signor Li Calsi, Pianist to her Royal Highness the Duchess of Cambridge.

MR. MYLES B. FOSTER has succeeded Mr. Willing at the Foundling; Mr. H. R. Rose has been appointed to St. Pancras, in place of the late Mr. Henry Smart; and Mr. Collingwood Banks has been elected to Christ Church, Newgate Street, a post long held by the late Mr. J. T. Cooper.

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